

Testimony of

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Before the

Education Committee

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Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

I testify today in support of House Bill 6884. This bill takes important steps toward addressing the educator shortage in Connecticut, showing educators that theirs is a respected profession, and ensuring that our classrooms and schools can provide the best possible education for our students.

Teaching over 20 years, 2020 was more like teaching 5 years. I am not a normal whiner, however, my story may sway at least one person who is listening. I taught having 2020 brutal covid and took zero sick time.

I was very sick / almost hospitalized, but taught each day and then corrected into the night and answered emails for 46 fifth graders.

I and taught every single day sick because I didn't know HOW to leave sub plans, nobody did.

I taught when my mother was taken by ambulance out of our home. She was my best friend who lived with us. I taught while spending lunch breaks begging the hospital staff to facetime my mother, or drop off photos for her wall. Then returned home to correct papers and answer emails for 46 students and parents.

I taught live videos and worked when I got the phone call that my mom was dying down the road from me in the hospital. A fellow teacher took over for me so I could go in for 4 minutes. I was allowed 4 minutes to say a lifetime of words to my mom. She was fully conscious. Then I went home and planned her funeral of only 10 people outside as protocol was, wrote her obituary, packed her clothes, while planning the next days lesson.

I taught with no grief time for my mother. I taught the next day. I taught until a mom literally got onto my zoom lesson, heard my coughing and knew my mom had died and took over. So I guess I got ONE day of grieving/sick time during that whole year of teaching. The next year I had half my class in and half on the computer alternating days. I had 46 students again and had to balance out teaching while doing probate and all my mothers fiduciary duties. I didn't miss school. There were no substitutes.

We aren't asking for anything that wasn't earned. I earned AT LEAST what we are asking for. We are not asking for any more than we went above and beyond to deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

